

296 EAST MAIN STREET, WESTMINSTER

YINGLING HOUSE

The "Catharine Yingling House" is one of the finest, and least changed, examples of a form that dominated Westminster's first 150 years, and which still asserts itself today. Three stories tall, five bays wide, with a two-story gable roofed ell, the building was at once typical of, yet superior to, an entire type. It is taller, more pleasingly proportioned, and trimmed with greater fineness than nearly any of its contemporaneous structures. Yet for all this, it is significant to note that when a leading family wished to build in Westminster, in the 1850's, it closed a generations-old pattern.

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Catharine Yingling House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

296 East Main Street (MD 32)

6

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Carroll

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☒ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Garland E. Zepp

Telephone #: 848-3430

STREET &amp; NUMBER

2548 Halter Road

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21157

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Carroll County Office Building

Liber #: 445

Folio #: 660

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Westminster

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION                                     |                                       | CHECK ONE                                   | CHECK ONE   |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD                 | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR                 | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

---

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

One of the most impressive buildings in Westminster, 296 East Main Street (Md. Route 32) is a fine example of a large I house which, despite appendages and changes in use (to apartments), has retained its integrity and general atmosphere.

The house is L-shaped in plan, opening to the southeast. Fronting the south side of main street is its 5 bay 3 story north facade, which rests on low fieldstone foundations. The walls of the house; are brick; the brick on the entrance front is laid in 5 course common bond. Colors of the north front brick range from pink to black; such a range is rare for the City. No documents have been discovered relating to the construction of the house so the source of these iron-rich bricks is unknown.

The entrance door is the central bay on the ground floor. The 4 recessed-panel door is topped by a 6 light transom with flanking 3 light windows along the upper half of the door. The door panels are softened by quarter-round molding; the door sits in a panelled recess, about one foot within the exterior wall surface, and is approached by 2 simple brick steps. Deeply carved brackets support a dentilled cornice.

The four remaining ground floor bays, and the five bays in the second and third stories are all 6/6 double-hung sash windows. The windows, located between three course flat arches and wooden sills, have simple enframement and are all regularly, symmetrically placed.

A six-bracketed dentilled cornice finishes the eaves and furthers the overall impression of restrained regularity. The gable roof (with ends to the east and west) is covered with tin; flat-capped chimneys, flush with the gables, strengthen the houses symmetry. (The eastern chimney has been removed, but traces of it are clearly visible.)

The south front of the section of the house parallel with Main Street has three windows (one per floor) opposite the eastern windows of the north facade. The south wall is laid in 10 course common bond. A small basement window is just to the east of the shed-roofed cellar entrance.

Brick work is rougher on the gable end facades; on the east, the size of the brick and its bonding pattern are somewhat irregular; headers, ranging from 2½" - 4", appear randomly. There are no openings on this front except for a small 4-light window between the chimney and the street facade.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

| PERIOD  | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC          | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |

## SPECIFIC DATES

c. 1850

## BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Yingling Family

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Number 296 East Main Street called the "Catharine Yingling House" in this report would be significant in any town, not because it was the home of the great, or for that matter, because it is the singular product of a great mind. Rather, the house stands out as a very fine and relatively unchanged, early example of a brick I house (with service wing). The stateliness of this style, emphasized here by the excellence of the unknown masons and carpenters, and of the owner whose eve selected the front facade bricks and the deep gold paint that covers the trim (including the louvered shutters which flank each window) makes it clear that the successive owners have felt the need to make a definite statement about themselves. They have succeeded.

When the house was built (sometime between 1844 and 1869) Westminster was no longer a new City, but it was not excessively staid. It had a tradition of excellence in a few industries (e.g. tanning) and was becoming, in the best sense, a provincial capital. Therefore, it seems natural that when a leading family decided to build a house, they would build it in a provincial (vernacular) style, but would engage the best available talent in a, by then, mature local school of craftsmanship. (There was a flourishing brick yard, Oursler's, about a half mile from here, and several local craftsmen had achieved a moderate reknown.) To borrow from Sir John Summerson.

"Here has been a confluence of circumstances, crystalizing in a structure where the quality of an epoch is gathered, so that it stands clear above the average of its own day. The house cannot be said to be of great significance as a work of art, but is a little eminence in the art of its time." (Heavenly Mansions, p. 224.)

The first person to buy lot 25 from William Winchester was Enoch Davis, in 1768; when Jacob and Elias Yingling purchased the lot (March 25, 1844, deed 3/267 the price, for this and another lot, was \$250.72, indicating that the house was not built. However, when Catherine Yingling's executor, William Yingling, sold the property

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Lot 25 as shown on a plat of Westminster- recorded among the land records of Frederick County in Book L, Page 472 (date August 31, 1778).

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Christopher Weeks, Consultant

October, 1976

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Westminster Historical Sites Survey

STREET &amp; NUMBER

TELEPHONE

c/o City Hall - Public Works Department

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Westminster

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

Opposite, the gabled west facade has a matching attic window, but also has one window (identical in treatment to those on the north facade) on each of the ground and second stories. These are located midway between the chimney and the facade wall. The west wall is laid in 4 course common bond.

Beyond the 3 story section of the house, a long gabled roofed 2 story wing stretches out to the southwest. Dating is difficult here, but it seems most likely that the original part of this section (contemporaneous with the main house?) was 2 bays (1 room deep). Indeed, 4 windows are placed regularly with themselves and vis-a-vis those in the main section's west facade (windows are treated the same as those discussed above). The eastern side of this wing has 2 large windows. Thus the original home probably had on each floor, one east room, a through hall, and a double parlor arrangement to the west.

Fairly soon after the original house was constructed, the ell was doubled in length (there is a slight seam in the brickwork). The extended west facade continues the window placement and treatment scheme, but with only the southern most bay being built. Opposite, on the east facade, is a matching window. A recessed 2-tiered loggia forms the north-west quadrant of the whole ell. Vertically aligned doors lead into the first section of the ell.

A modern flight of wooden steps leads from the ground to a 10 foot asbestos covered cube which was added c. 1950 off the main building, above the original addition. The steps also make it possible to get to the then created apartments in the additions, which can be entered by modern glass and aluminum storm doors in the center of their respective porches.

As the house was built into a small rise, the ground floor is, towards the rear, a few feet above ground level necessitating a set of four brick steps which lead from the ground to the first story of the loggia. The fieldstone foundation, and the cellar, are both exposed on the south facade of the ell. The cellar can be entered through a tongue-in-groove door with a simple wooden lineal above it; directly above the door, on each floor is a 6/6 window similar in design to those in the rest of the house; a similar window is located to the west of the cellar door.

Brick in the addition, and on the east, west, and south facades of the main house, is a more regular color (rust) than on the street facade

Eave moldings in the ell are identical to those on east and west of the main building; the asbestos covered section has only gutters as its roof line decoration.

"consisting of a brick house and lot of ground containing  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre", it fetched \$1505. (For a price comparison, in 1866, lots 2 and 3, directly across Main Street, together with a tan shop and mill buildings, brought \$700.)

The contemporaneous importance of the house was such that it caused the mind of diarist Katharine Shellman to remember "Miss Kitty Yingling" as having lived there in 1832, when, as argued above, it is unlikely in the extreme that the house was built before 1844.

The house had a variety of owners (including George W. Miller, see Number 294 East Main Street) until its present owners purchased it in 1968.





296 E. Main St., Westminster

CARR-344

NE facade

10/76 C. Weech

A-30



CARR 344

CARR-344

~~505~~<sup>SW</sup> arcade

296 E. Main St. Westminster

9/76 Check



CARR 344

294 E. Main St. Westminste

D. facade

10/76 C. Weech



ARR 344

96 E. Main St. Westminster

MS facade

7/74 C. Weeks